

What's New in the MPDC

FEBRUARY 26, 2001

PROBLEM-SOLVING SUCCESS: PSA 512 CLEANS UP DANGEROUS BLOCK

What would you do if you saw your children climb onto a roof of an abandoned building, and jump off to a pile of mattresses below? Or if your children's playground and route to school included an entire abandoned block filled with trash, bottles, weeds, couches, mattresses, and old tires—some of which were prone to catch on fire? On PSA 512, residents, police and other city agencies came together to target these and other unsafe conditions and beautify their neighborhood. Using the "Partnerships for Problem Solving" process, a group of three dozen dedicated residents and officers documented the problems on the 700 block of 16th Street, NE – then rallied the resources to address them. Department of Public Works crews, assisted in some cases by residents and PSA 512 officers working on their own time, repaired street lights, trimmed trees, cut weeds and hauled away trash in vacant lots. Staff and parents of Miner Elementary School helped to spearhead the effort, including a follow-up neighborhood beautification project. In addition to making the area safer for children, the community policing partners know that a clean and tidy neighborhood sends a strong message to would-be criminals that they will not be tolerated. To learn more about the MPDC's "Policing for Prevention" strategy, and to read this and other success stories, click on:

Do you have a community policing success story you would like to have share with others by posting on the MPDC Web site? Contact Margaret Poethig in the Policing for Prevention office at 202-727-7432 or e-mail mpoethig@mpdc.org.

www.mpdc.org (Click on Services & Programs)

WEAR YOUR BIKE HELMETS – IT'S THE LAW FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN DC

With warmer weather just around the corner, the National Safe Kids Campaign reminds us that motor vehicle collisions account for nearly 90 percent of all bicycle-related deaths in the US, and that in many of these cases the cyclist was not wearing a safety helmet. To help protect our young cyclists, the DC Council recently enacted a law that requires those under 16 to wear a helmet while cycling in the District. While penalties are waived on the first offense, second and subsequent offenses do carry a \$25 fine for the parent or legal guardian. And, of course, the MPDC encourages all cyclists – regardless of their age – to wear bicycle helmets and observe other safe cycling practices. For more information about DC's bicycle helmet law, and for links to a variety of bicycle safety sites, go to:

www.mpdc.org (Click on Safety Tips)

FREE CELL PHONES FOR CITIZEN PATROL GROUPS

To make it easier for citizen patrol and neighborhood watch groups in the District to obtain free cellular phones under the Communities on Phone Patrol (COPP) program, the MPDC has put the application form on-line. The telephones are pre-programmed to 9-1-1 and the 3-1-1 non-emergency number, allowing citizen patrol participants to have instant access to the police. To learn more about COPP, and to access the on-line application form, go to:

www.mpdc.org (Click on Services and Programs)

KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT HATE CRIMES IN DC

Hard copies of the hate crimes brochure, as well as presentations to community groups on the problem, can be requested from the MPDC's Community Outreach Section by calling 202-727-2662 or e-mailing RaiHowell@excite.com.

More than a decade ago, the District of Columbia enacted a law to address the problem of hate crimes committed in the District. The Bias-Related Crime Act of 1989 provides for increased penalties whenever a crime is motivated by bias or hate. Because bias-related crimes have a tremendous effect not just on the individual victims but also on an entire community, the MPDC encourages the public to report incidents and the Department is committed to investigating them. For example, the MPDC operates a hate crimes hotline – 202-727-0589 – for reporting offenses. And to help educate the community

about hate crimes – what they are, how to report them and what resources are available to victims – the MPDC has published a primer on “What You Should Know about Hate Crimes.” This document, including links to various groups that provide assistance to hate crime victims, can be viewed at:

www.mpdc.org (Click on Programs and Services)

UPCOMING: “ASK THE CHIEF” ON WTOP RADIO

Each month, Chief Ramsey discusses public safety matters and takes callers’ questions live on the air during the “Ask the Chief” program on WTOP Radio (1500 AM). This month’s program will take place on Thursday, March 1, from 10-11 a.m. In addition to calls, e-mail questions are also accepted at wtopnews.com. Learn more about “Ask the Chief” at:

www.wtopnews.com

40TH ANNUAL WASHINGTON BOAT SHOW: A GOOD TIME TO THINK ABOUT SAFETY

With the 40th Annual Washington Boat Show wrapping up this weekend at the Washington Convention Center, now is a good time for boat owners and enthusiasts who use DC’s waterways to review some basic boating safety tips. The MPDC’s Harbor Patrol is committed to ensuring safe and enjoyable boating for all. You can learn more about the history and function of the Harbor Patrol, as well as legal requirements for boats in the District and some common-sense safety tips, by clicking on

For more information about 40th Annual Washington Boat Show, go to:

www.washingtonboatshow.com

www.mpdc.org (Click on Safety Tips)

Information, ideas or comments about this service?

E-mail Kevin Morison, MPDC’s Director of Corporate Communications, at kmorison_mpdc@excite.com.

Would you like to have this information emailed to you? Just go to our web site and register with crimereports.com.

METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT WEB PAGE
WWW.MPDC.ORG